

<https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/local-transport-today/news/56067/speed-camera-debate-re-opened/>

includes the following

Speed camera debate re-opened

A speed camera critic is challenging academics over new research suggesting that fixed speed cameras have reduced killed and serious injuries. A London School of Economics research paper published last October said that, between 1992 and 2016, speed cameras had cut accidents by between 17 and 39 per cent and fatalities by between 58 and 68 per cent within 500 metres of camera sites. The paper, *Do speed cameras save lives?*, by Cheng Keat Tang, a PhD student and researcher in the department of geography and environment, analysed before and after collision data for 2,500 camera sites in England, Scotland and Wales.

Said Tang: “The study clearly shows that speed cameras reduce both the number and severity of road accidents. Given the huge number of fatal accidents that take place on our roads every year, the introduction of more cameras could save hundreds of lives annually and make our roads safer for users.”

Independent researcher and speed camera critic Idris Francis this week wrote to LSE’s director, Dame Minouche Shafik, calling on her to withdraw the paper, saying it contains serious errors of fact and analysis.

But Steve Gibbons, professor of economic geography at LSE, has told Francis: “We disagree that the analysis is ‘seriously flawed’. The work has been presented at many academic conferences and been subject to review by various colleagues. The results appear to be broadly in line with another UK study using different methods to deal with selection issues.

“I can reassure you that the author has no vested interests and had no strong prior beliefs regarding the effectiveness of these interventions. He is simply applying an alternative scientific method to assess if previous studies were in fact over estimating the impacts. To anyone other than an anti-speed camera campaigner, the results would, I think, seem relatively uncontroversial.”

Idris's letter to LTT:

University should withdraw speed camera report

Idris Francis Petersfield Hampshire GU32

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You reported (LTT 11 Dec 15) that Transport for London had refused to withdraw claims of "more than 50% reductions" achieved by their speed and red-light cameras even though the reductions recorded where there are no cameras were, if anything, rather greater.

Not to be outdone, the Spatial Economics Research Centre at the London School of Economics published last September a 43-page Discussion Paper 221 Do Speed Cameras Save Lives? containing so many serious errors that I needed 15 pages to identify and explain them. They include:

- wildly exaggerated 'costs' of collisions, contribution of speeding to accidents and estimates of camera effectiveness
- incorrect definition of serious injuries
- a failure to recognise the degree of under-reporting of non-fatal collisions and serious flaws in official data
- ignoring some 40 adverse effects of cameras, many of which cause collisions outside site boundaries
- using calendar year installation dates and narrowly-defined site boundaries which exclude nearby side effects.
- failing to understand and adjust for long-term trends, claiming that camera effectiveness continues to increase for many years
- claiming a net benefit per camera per year of £21,119, the difference between total estimated benefit of £439,279 and total estimated costs of £418,160, even though, at 4%, that benefit is far smaller than the margin of error of each parameter used for those estimates! No businessman in his right mind would pursue a project based on such figures!

Despite all the above, two senior academics at the SERC have repeatedly dismissed my criticisms out of hand without addressing in any way the points I raised, while another 28 have failed to respond at all.

As it is clearly unacceptable that a failed speed camera policy should yet again be supported by such incompetent analysis and wishful thinking I have this afternoon copied all of this material to Dame Minouche Shafik, director of the LSE, asking that the paper be withdrawn.